



Frequently Asked Questions

Wastewater/Stormwater Discharge Permit Fees in Washington State

Q. *Why do people pay wastewater and/or stormwater permit fees?*

A. In 1988 Washington voters passed Initiative 97 (RCW 90.48.465) requiring wastewater discharge permit holders to pay for a permit and being allowed to discharge to state waters. The Department Ecology is required by the Legislature to fund the permit program by collecting permit fees.

Q. *Who pays permit fees?*

A. Industries and municipalities that have National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, state wastewater discharge permits, and facilities issued temporary wastewater permits must pay fees.

Q. *What do permit fees pay for?*

A. Fees pay for Ecology's management of the Wastewater Discharge Permit Program. Some of these activities include: reviewing permit applications, issuing permits, conducting on-site inspections; reviewing various technical documents such as engineering reports, solid waste plans, operating plans, and discharge monitoring reports; and providing technical assistance.

Q. *How are permit fees billed?*

A. Ecology mails invoices directly to permit holders. Permit holders owing more than \$350 in fees are given the option of paying the fee amount in full or request to have the annual fee split into two equal payments. If the fee is less than \$350 the full amount is billed at the beginning of the state fiscal year (July 1).

Q. *When does someone stop paying permit fees?*

A. Permit fees stop when Ecology officially cancels or terminates the permit. Permit holders need to contact their Ecology regional office representative as soon as a permitted activity stops. Permit fees will continue until Ecology cancels the permit, regardless of when the permitted activity stopped.

Q. *What time period does the annual permit fee cover?*

A. Permit fees are based on the state fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). Fees for new permits issued during the fiscal year are prorated from the issue date of the permit to the end of the fiscal year.

Q. *Does Ecology provide any relief for small businesses?*

A. Yes. The permit fee regulation, Wastewater Discharge Permit Fees (Chapter 173-224 WAC), contains a provision that allows Ecology to reduce annual permit fees for eligible small businesses. Approval or denial of the fee reduction requests are based on annual gross revenue. Please contact Sally Attwood at Ecology, P.O. Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600, to obtain an application form or to receive more information. Her phone number is (360) 407-6462, or you can send e-mail to satt461@ecy.wa.gov

Q. *Who do I contact if I have questions regarding wastewater or stormwater permits?*

A. Water quality permit coordinators in each of Ecology's regional offices are the primary contacts for information about specific permits.

Northwest Regional Office

*King, Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish
San Juan, Kitsap, and Island*
Tricia Miller (425) 649-7181
tmil461@ecy.wa.gov

Central Regional Office

*Yakima, Benton, Klickitat, Chelan
Douglas, Kittitas, and Okanogan*
Rick Frye (509) 575-2821
rfry461@ecy.wa.gov

Southwest Regional Office

*Thurston, Clallam, Jefferson, Mason
Grays Harbor, Pierce, Lewis, Skamania
Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, Clark, and Pacific*
Carey Grunenfelder (360) 407-6280
cgru461@ecy.wa.gov

Eastern Regional Office

*Spokane, Grant, Adams, Whitman,
Franklin, Ferry, Stevens, Pend
Oreille, and Lincoln*
Cynthia Luce (509) 456-5310
cluc461@ecy.wa.gov

For statewide **stormwater permit**,
Contact Linda Matlock (360) 407-6437
lmata461@ecy.wa.gov

Q. *Who do I contact if I have questions regarding permit fees?*

A. For more information, please contact:

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